1: Swanton E-5 (1911-12)1928 NN11 Creek NN11

"It is an established rule, that pregnant women be entirely alone at the time of delivery; and this rule is rigidly adhered to. Nature seems to have fortified them with strength to undergo the operation without assistance. On the 12th of December, 1790, four women came from the white ground, ten miles from Little Tallassie, to sell horse-ropes to the beloved man. The day was cold and rainy, with a sleet of snow; they stayed all night. About midnight, one of them, a young woman, was taken in travail; her mother was with her, and immediately ordered her to take some fire and go into the swamp, about thirty rods from the out-house where they slept. She went alone, was delivered of her child, and at ten o'clock next morning, being bare-footed and half naked, took the infant on her back, and returned home through the rain and snow, which still continued to fall, without the least inconvenience.

"This circumstance, had I not been present and seen the woman with the infant on her back, I might have been doubtful of its possibility."[a]

Romans says: "The women are just as easily delivered as those of the other savages, and immediately after birth the infant is plunged into cold water."[b]

According to Jackson Lewis a prospective mother was not allowed to eat at the same table as the rest of the family.

Virility was a matter of pride with Creek men—the more children they had the better—and Adair says that the Indians of his acquaintance entertained "a contemptible opinion of their females that are barren—sterility they consider as proceeding from the divine anger, on account of their conjugal infidelity."[c]

Among many tribes twins were held in abhorrence and one of them was frequently killed, but Mr. Grayson informed me that the Creeks anciently considered the younger of twins was likely to make an efficient kĭla or prophet.

Sometimes the child was kept from nursing for four days and was made to swallow certain small roots to make it live long. The same effect was produced by keeping it indoors four months so that no one could see it.

Adair has the following to say regarding the sympathetic magic practiced on Chickasaw babies in order to insure them good fortune:

"Their male children they chuse to raise on the skins of panthers, on account of the communicative principle, which they reckon all nature is possessed of, in conveying qualities according to the regimen that is followed: and, as the panther is endued with many qualities, beyond any of his fellow animals in the American woods, as smelling,

[a] Swan in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. v, p. 271.
[b] Romans, Nat. Hist. E. and W. Fla., p. 92.
[c] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 72.

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764 involves one real aboriginal explanation of the custom. His account of the treatment accorded the body of a suicide I have seen nowhere else.

The Alabama now living in Texas give the following account of their old burial customs:

Nowadays several persons dig a grave, but in former times a single old man performed the office. While he was at work upon it he ate by himself, for it was thought that anyone who ate with him would fall sick. He did not smoke, and, no matter how hot the sun was, he drank no water. Anciently the body was bundled tightly together, wrapped about, and placed upon a board which was then sunk into the earth, head to the east, so that when his spirit got up it would be in the right position to start on the spirit trail westward.[46] A framework of poles was afterwards put all about the grave. Afterwards the gravedigger washed his clothes, took some of the button-snake root, and vomited. Then he could eat, and the relatives of the deceased gave him a horse in payment. Those who attended to burials in later times must duck all over in the creek four times no matter how cold the weather. My informant had done this when ice was on the water and the snow flying, and he almost fainted from the cold. Blankets were put under the head of the corpse as a pillow and a butcher knife in his hand with which to fight off an eagle supposed to infest the trail of the dead. For four days the wife or husband and the children and near relatives visited the grave every morning before breakfast and every evening before supper, and at their evening visits they lighted a fire at the head. After each of these visits they went to a stream, bathed all over, and washed their clothing before they ate. For four days they must eat no food that contained salt, and during the same period they remained quiet and made no noise. Not only the family but all of the people abstained from playing ball then, though they might do some hunting.

Although the later accounts do not mention the custom of discharging a gun the moment a death took place, it appears from Gregg that it was maintained until after the Creeks had removed west.[47]

[845] Among all of the Creek tribes a miscarriage, a stillborn child, or a very young child was laid away in a hollow tree where it was nicely ceiled in. Otherwise it was thought that there would be a drought, that a pestilence would break out, or that deaths from other causes would occur.

The Diurnal Cycle

512 805 Adair has the following regarding divisions of the day recognized among the Chickasaw, with which those of the Creeks were practically identical:

[46] This means that the body was laid flat on its back. The orientation must have been different from that common among the Creeks generally.

[47] Gregg, Commerce of the Prairies, in Early Western Travels, vol. XX, p. 328.